

Ways To Ruin U.S. Shipping Listed By 'Secret Society'

Washington, April 14 [Special]. What the American merchant marine needs is its own *James Bond* to combat the evil machinations of a little-known organization dedicated to the destruction of the United States merchant fleet called S.O.B.I.G.M.

This organization has put together a pamphlet entitled "Handbook for Saboteurs," which was circulated clandestinely around the city.

The booklet includes a resume of the group's accomplishments to date, as well as an eight-point plan for the total ruination of the remaining American merchant marine.

"Less Than 900"

"When we began our work in 1945, the United States was the strongest merchant power on the seas. It had a merchant fleet of 2,332 privately owned vessels of a thousand tons or over. Now, thanks largely to our efforts, it has less than 900 active vessels of comparable size," the introduction to the manual states.

"Now," it continues, "the United States has sunk to a sixth rate maritime power, behind Britain, Norway, Japan, Liberia and the U.S.S.R. And, while these fleets continue to grow, the United States fleet continues to decline."

The publication also compliments the members of the organization on the effectiveness of their sabotage of the American shipbuilding program.

"In 1945 the United States had more than 80 shipyards, all going full blast. Now, 20 years later, it has only 33 shipyards, 4 about to close, and most of the others with just enough work to go on limping along."

"These successes, of course, were achieved at considerable cost to the American economy. In the last five years alone the cut-back in shipping and shipbuilding has eliminated 40,000 highly skilled and well paying American jobs with, obviously, rather unfortunate effects upon many American seaborad communities," the pamphlet went on.

"Over the last 20 years the loss of such jobs has cost the United States economy at least \$18,000,000,000 in taxable and spendable income," the manual concluded.

8 Steps Listed

The eight steps listed by S.O.B.I.G.M. as its "most effective lies" in the spreading the destruction of the American merchant marine are:

1. "Insist that the United States has the strongest merchant marine in the world." Rather than debating this fact when in a discussion, members of the group are instructed "to ignore it, which—unless you blunder—you should be able to do with complete success since, as we have already pointed out, few members of the American general public even suspect its existence."

2. "Insist that in any emergency the so-called 'effective control fleet' could be counted upon by the United States Government, just as though it were part of the United States merchant marine."

Just Whistle

In order to return these vessels, which are owned by Americans but are registered under foreign flags, to the control of the American Government, all the United States must do is "whistle, 'Won't you come home, Bill Bailey, won't you come home.'"

3. "Insist that, in addition to the 'effective control' fleet, the United States can always count on the large and growing fleets of its friends and allies."

If you don't believe that this is a lie, the manual says, just look at World War II, in which America had to supply both itself and its allies with the seapower necessary for the war effort.

4. "Insist that the United States can always build more ships in time if she needs them, as she did during World War II." Even S.O.B.I.G.M. is forced to admit the "lame-ness" of this argument, however.

Lies 5 and 6 both deal with stressing the importance of air transportation, and running down the importance of merchant seapower.

"Too Expensive"

7. "Insist that the United States fleet is too expensive, and that subsidies drain the United States economy." In S.O.B.I.G.M.'s "real facts" for the "private information" of its agents, that organization admits that subsidies cost \$225,000,000, while the shipping industry's contribution to the Amer-

ican economy is about \$3,100,000,000.

8. "Insist that United States merchant seamen's salaries make the United States merchant fleet an economic impossibility, by making American shipping too expensive to be competitive." However, the group does point out that American sailors do not make any more than workers on shore.

S.O.B.I.G.M., it must be noted, stands for "Sign Off Brother, I've Got Mine," referring to foreign attitudes toward the American merchant marine.